

# Kickstart Your Writing: A Simple Picture-Prompt Freewriting Tool You Can Run Anywhere

Sometimes all you need to get your words flowing is a simple nudge – a picture to spark your imagination and a space to just write without pressure. While there are many fancy apps out there, I wanted a dead-simple tool I could keep and customize myself.

So, I put together a little web page using basic building blocks (HTML, CSS, and a tiny bit of JavaScript). The best part? You don't need to be a tech wizard to use it or even add your own pictures! You just need a web browser and a place to save a couple of files.

Think of it like a digital version of having a stack of photos and a notebook.

Here's how you can get and use this simple tool:

## What is it?

It's just three small files that work together:

1. **index.html**: This is the main page. It tells your web browser where to put the picture, where to put the writing box, and where the buttons go.
2. **style.css**: This file makes the page look nice – it handles the colors, fonts, spacing, and makes sure things fit on your screen.
3. **script.js**: This is the brains! It holds the list of picture links, picks a random one to show you, makes the "Get New Image" button work, and handles saving your writing or exporting it.

## Step 1: Get the Files

I've put these three files in a shared folder (for example, on Google Drive, Dropbox, or a similar service).

- Click on [Link to your shared folder here].
- You should see the three files: **index.html**, **style.css**, and **script.js**.
- Select all three files (or download the whole folder if that option is available). Your browser will likely download them as a single **.zip** file.
- Save the **.zip** file to a place you'll remember on your computer (like your Downloads folder, or a new folder on your Desktop called "Freewrite Tool").

## Step 2: Set it Up (No Installation Needed!)

This tool runs right in your web browser using the files you downloaded. You don't need to install anything special!

- Find the **.zip** file you just downloaded.
- **On Windows**: Right-click the **.zip** file and choose "Extract All..." or "Extract Here". Pick

a folder to put the files in (the folder name is often the same as the zip file).

- **On Mac:** Just double-click the `.zip` file. A new folder with the same name will appear, containing the files.
- **IMPORTANT:** Make sure the three files (`index.html`, `style.css`, `script.js`) are all inside the *same folder* after you extract them.

### Step 3: Start Writing!

Now for the fun part:

- Open the folder where you extracted the files.
- Find the file named `index.html`.
- **Double-click on `index.html`.**
- It should open in your default web browser.
- You'll see a picture and a large box below it.
- Start typing! Just write whatever comes to mind based on the picture.

### Using the Buttons:

- **Get New Image:** Click this button, and the program will load a different random picture from its list, giving you a fresh prompt. *Note: When you click this, the writing box will clear so you can start fresh for the new picture.*
- **Export Text:** Finished writing? Click this button, and your browser will download a simple text file (`.txt`) containing everything you typed in the box. You can then open this file in Notepad, Word, Google Docs, or anywhere else.

### Saving Your Writing:

The tool has a couple of ways to help you save your text:

1. **Automatic (in your browser):** As you type, the program automatically saves your text right inside your web browser's memory. If you accidentally close the tab and then re-open `index.html`, your writing *should* still be in the box! (Just be aware this isn't a permanent backup; if you clear your browser's history or cache, this saved text might be lost).
2. **Manual Export:** Use the "Export Text" button whenever you want a definite copy saved as a file on your computer. This is the safest way to keep your finished pieces.

### Want to Use Your Own Pictures? (It's Easy!)

The coolest part is you can easily change the list of pictures the tool uses.

1. **Find `script.js`:** Go back to the folder where you put the files and find `script.js`.
2. **Open with a Simple Editor:** Right-click on `script.js` and choose "Open with...". Select a simple plain text editor like **Notepad** (Windows), **TextEdit** (Mac - remember to use "Make Plain Text" under the Format menu if it looks like a word processor), or a free code editor like **VS Code**. **Do NOT use Microsoft Word or Google Docs**, as they will

mess up the code.

3. **Find the List:** Look for the section near the top that starts with `const imageUrls =` [ followed by lines of text in single quotes that look like web addresses:

```
const imageUrls = [  
  
  'https://example.com/pictures/first-photo.jpg',  
  
  'https://example.com/pictures/second-photo.png',  
  
  // More picture links here...  
  
];
```

4. **Add Your Picture Links:**

- Find the web address (URL) for a picture online that you want to use. It needs to be a direct link to the image file (ending in `.jpg`, `.png`, `.gif`, etc.). Free image sites like Unsplash, Pexels, or Pixabay are great for finding pictures. You can often right-click an image and look for "Copy Image Address".
- Add a new line *just before the* `];` at the end of the list.
- Type a single quote `'`, paste your picture's web address, type another single quote `'`, and then add a comma `,`.
- Make sure *every line in the list except the very last one* ends with a comma.
- *Alternatively, use pictures from your computer:* Put the image file (e.g., `my-cat.jpg`) in the *same folder* as `index.html` and `script.js`. Then, just add `'my-cat.jpg'` to the list.

5. **Save the File:** Go to "File" > "Save" in your text editor.

6. **Refresh the Page:** Go back to your web browser showing the freewriting tool (`index.html`) and refresh the page (usually by pressing F5 on your keyboard, or clicking the refresh icon next to the address bar).

That's it! The tool will now include your new pictures when you click "Get New Image".

Give it a try and see where the pictures take your writing! Happy freewriting!